

URBAN DISTRICT OF SEDGLEY

Annual Reports

OF THE

Medical Officer of Health
and Sanitary Inspector

FOR THE YEAR

1947



BILSTON & SEDGLEY:

JOHN PRICE & SONS, PRINTERS

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ANNUAL REPORTS OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH AND THE SANITARY INSPECTOR FOR THE YEAR 1947.

Chairman of Health Committee :
COUNCILLOR E. E. FITHERN.

Medical Officer of Health :
F. B. MACKENZIE, D.S.O., M.C., M.A., M.B., Ch.B., D.P.H.

Chief Sanitary Inspector and Cleansing Superintendent :
DAVID J. W. ROBERTSON, M.S.I.A., M.Inst.P.C.,
Cert. Meat and Food Inspector.

Additional Sanitary Inspector :
R. B. M. ANDERSON,
A.R.San.I., A.I.S.E., M.R.I.P.H.H., M.S.I.A.

General Sanitary Assistant :
R. BOWYER.

Public Health Clerks :
Mrs. F. DETHERIDGE. Miss G. WILLIAMS.

STATISTICAL SUMMARY, 1947.

Area : 3,854 acres.

Population : 21,800.

Number of Inhabited Houses : 5,895.

Sum represented by a penny rate : £330.

Rateable Value : £84,913.

General Rate : 24/- in the £.

Birth Rate : 18·39.

Death Rate : 11·14.

Infantile Death Rate, per 1,000 Births : 39·9.

Deaths from Diarrhoea : 1.

Deaths from Pulmonary Tuberculosis : 6 ; from other Tuberculosis
Diseases : 1.

Tuberculosis Death Rate : Pulmonary, 0·27 ; Non-Pulmonary,
·0459.

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
for the
URBAN DISTRICT OF SEDGLEY.

To the Chairman and Members of the Sedgley Urban District Council.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is my privilege to present my Annual Report for 1947, incorporating that of your Sanitary Inspector, and such is submitted in accordance with the requirements of the Ministry of Health Circular 170/47.

The Report deals with

- (a) Vital Statistics as affecting the Area.
- (b) General Provision of Health Services in the Area.
- (c) Sanitary Circumstances of the Area.
- (d) Housing.
- (e) Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases.

The birth rate for the year shows an increase on last year, being 18·39 as against 16·09, but is lower than the rate of England and Wales which is 20·5.

The death rate of 11·14 is higher than that of last year, when it was 9·81, but lower than that of the country as a whole — 12·0.

Infantile Mortality Rate indicates the number per 1,000 births of children who died before reaching the age of one year, and here the rate is 39·9 compared with the rate of England and Wales as a whole, 41. The actual number of deaths under one year of age was 16, as against 11 last year.

The number of cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis notified was 16, against 17 last year and the number of deaths 6 against 5 last year, giving a death rate of 0·27 as against 0·23 in 1946.

There has been a marked increase in the incidence of Measles and Scarlet Fever throughout the year. The type of Scarlet Fever has been mainly of very slight severity, so slight that cases may have occurred undetected but at the same time maintained the prevalence by innocent and unwitting contact. The increase in Measles is in keeping with the biennial nature of occurrence of this disease.

The epidemic of Acute Poliomyelitis commonly known as Infantile Paralysis, which affected the country during the summer months of the year, fortunately spared your district, no cases occurring.

Again I wish to express my appreciation of the help and support given me by the Chairman and Members of the Health and Housing Committees, and to commend the enthusiasm and live interest they take in the health of the community.

I also thank my local medical colleagues for their help and continued co-operation.

I am glad to take this yearly opportunity of thanking your Clerk for his helpful guidance and advice on points which have arisen from time to time. I would also record my appreciation and thanks for the efficient services of your Sanitary Inspector and other members of the Public Health Staff. I am also indebted to your Surveyor for his helpful co-operation.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

F. B. MACKENZIE,

Medical Officer of Health.

October, 1948.

VITAL STATISTICS.

		Total	M.	F.	Birth Rate
Live Births	.. ..	401	192	209	18·39
Legitimate	..	394	191	203	
Illegitimate	..	7	1	6	

Still Births : Total, 14. Rate per 1,000 Total Births, 33·73.

		Total	M.	F.	Rate
Deaths	.. ..	243	121	122	11·14

Number of Women dying in or in consequence of Childbirth :—
From sepsis, 0. Other puerperal causes, 1.

Death Rate of Infants under one year of age :—

All Infants per 1,000 Live Births (16)	.. ..	39·9
Legitimate Infants per 1,000 Legitimate Live Births (16)	.. ..	40·6
Illegitimate Infants per 1,000 Illegitimate Live Births (0)	.. ..	0
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)	.. ..	34
Deaths from Measles (all ages)	.. ..	1
Deaths from Whooping Cough (all ages)	.. ..	0
Deaths from Diarrhoea (under 2 years of age)	.. ..	1

BIRTH RATES.

	SEDGLEY		England and Wales
Year	No. of Births	Birth Rate	Birth Rate
1938	321	15·8	15·1
1939	304	14·69	15·0
1940	299	14·21	14·6
1941	294	13·77	14·2
1942	331	15·7	15·8
1943	364	17·37	16·5
1944	378	17·94	17·6
1945	331	15·78	16·1
1946	346	16·09	19·1
1947	401	18·39	20·5

DEATH RATES.

	SEDGLEY		England and Wales
Year	No. of Deaths	Death Rate	Death Rate
1938	221	10·9	11·6
1939	251	12·07	12·1
1940	236	11·22	14·3
1941	242	11·33	12·9
1942	232	11·0	11·6
1943	235	11·21	12·1
1944	195	9·25	11·6
1945	239	11·39	11·4
1946	211	9·81	11·5
1947	243	11·14	12·0

CAUSES OF DEATH DURING THE YEAR 1947.

	M.	F.
1. Typhoid and paratyphoid fevers	—	—
2. Cerebro-spinal fever	—	—
3. Scarlet fever	—	—
4. Whooping cough	—	—
5. Diphtheria	—	—
6. Tuberculosis of the respiratory system ..	3	3
7. Other forms of tuberculosis	—	1
8. Syphilitic diseases	—	—
9. Influenza	2	4
10. Measles	—	1
11. Acute poliomyelitis and polioencephalitis ..	—	—
12. Acute inf. encephalitis	—	—
13. Cancer of buccal cavity and œsophagus (males) and uterus (females)	2	2
14. Cancer of stomach and duodenum	3	—
15. Cancer of breast	—	5
16. Cancer of all other sites	12	10
17. Diabetes	1	3
18. Intracranial vascular lesions	8	16
19. Heart disease	40	38
20. Other diseases of circulatory system	1	5
21. Bronchitis.. .. .	14	8
22. Pneumonia	5	2
23. Other respiratory diseases	1	—
24. Ulcer of stomach or duodenum	2	—
25. Diarrhoea, under 2 years	1	—
26. Appendicitis	—	—
27. Other digestive diseases	1	1
28. Nephritis	1	1
29. Puerperal and post abortive sepsis	—	—
30. Other maternal causes	—	1
31. Premature birth	1	—
32. Congenital malformations, birth injuries and infantile diseases	6	4
33. Suicide	1	—
34. Road Traffic accidents	2	—
35. Other violent causes	3	3
36. All other causes	11	16
	121	122

INFANTILE MORTALITY, 1947.

Nett Deaths from causes stated at various ages under one year of age :—

Causes of Death	Under 1 week	1 to 2 weeks	2 to 3 weeks	3 to 4 weeks	Total under one month	1 to 3 months	3 to 6 months	6 to 9 months	9 to 12 months	Total Deaths under one year
Prematurity	3	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	3
Broncho Pneumonia ..	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	1	3
Convulsions	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	2
Gastro Enteritis ..	—	—	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Congenital Malformation	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
Spina Bifida	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	1
Congenital Atelectasis ..	2	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	2
Measles	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1
Congenital Pyloric Stenosis	—	—	—	1	1	—	—	—	—	1
Other causes	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	1
	8	—	2	1	11	—	2	2	1	16

INFANTILE MORTALITY RATE.

Year	SEDGLEY			England & Wales Rate per 1,000 Births
	Births	Deaths	Rate per 1,000 Births	
1938	321	17	53.0	53
1939	304	26	85.5	50
1940	299	9	30.0	55
1941	294	18	60.0	59
1942	331	12	36.2	49
1943	364	22	60.4	49
1944	378	12	31.7	46
1945	331	17	51.36	46
1946	346	11	31.79	43
1947	401	16	39.9	41

There was one death from Diarrhoea among children under two years of age.

GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES IN THE AREA.

Infectious Diseases.

Provision for admission and treatment of such cases is made with the West Midlands Joint Isolation Hospital Board and accommodation would appear to be ample, no difficulty having been experienced in getting cases admitted.

Smallpox.

Arrangements for isolation and treatment are provided by the South Staffordshire Joint Smallpox Hospital Board.

Tuberculosis.

Treatment is administered by the Staffordshire, Wolverhampton and Dudley Joint Board for Tuberculosis, Dispensaries being situate at Dudley and Wolverhampton, and various Sanatoria are available.

Venereal Diseases.

Facilities for treatment are provided under the County Council scheme.

Maternity.

Under County arrangements Maternity Units are available at the Rosemary Ednam Maternity Home, Sedgley, and at Wordsley.

Midwives, Ante-Natal Clinics and Child Welfare.

The supervising and administering Authority is the County Council.

General Hospitals.

All such are situate outside the Urban District. They are the voluntary hospitals of Wolverhampton, Dudley and Birmingham. They are easily accessible and the facilities afforded are made full use of.

Ambulance Service.

The Local Authority operates its own ambulance service for surgical, medical and accident cases. The ambulance is stationed locally. Infectious cases are dealt with by the Joint Isolation Hospital Board.

Laboratory Facilities.

Pathological and Bacteriological examinations and Chemical analyses are made at the respective County Laboratories. The facilities so provided are in constant use by the local medical practitioners.

SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA.

Water.

With the exception of the Goldthorn Hill area, which is supplied by the Wolverhampton Corporation, the district is supplied by the South Staffordshire Waterworks Company.

I am indebted to Mr. R. A. Robertson, B.Sc., M.Inst.C.E., and Mr. Brian L. McMillan, B.Sc., M.Inst.C.E., the respective Engineers-in-Chief of those undertakings for the following reports.

(a) **South Staffordshire Waterworks Company.**

- (i) "The water supplied to the Urban District of Sedgley has been satisfactory both as regards quality and quantity.
- (ii) The Sedgley district is supplied with waters from stations outside the Council's boundary. All waters from pumping stations owned by the Company are examined regularly both bacteriologically and chemically. Where treatment is installed both raw waters and treated waters are examined bacteriologically. The water supply within the Council's boundary is sampled at approximately monthly intervals at four points, namely, Sedgley Tanks, Nos. 1 and 2, Sedgley Reservoir and the Waterman's House, Woodsetton.

During the year 1947, 55 samples were taken at the above four points, of which number 52 were free from coliform bacteria and of the remaining three samples two confirmed aerogenes bacteria present in 100 ml., and the third sample confirmed non-faecal B.coli (type 2) in 50 ml. In no case was faecal B.coli present in any of the samples taken.

The average chemical results were satisfactory.

- (iii) The waters are not liable to plumbo-solvency but are examined at intervals for lead. No lead was detected in any of the 13 tap samples examined in 1947.
- (iv) Sterilisation of waters is carried out, when possible, at the pumping stations. This is largely precautionary. Contamination of mains following emptying, is safeguarded by chlorination on site. Special apparatus and staff are available for this purpose. These mains, reservoirs, etc., are not brought back into use until the water has been examined and pronounced satisfactory.

- (v) The total number of houses supplied by the Company within the Urban District at the 31st December, 1947, was 5,380. Of this number approximately 935 obtained their supply either from taps in yards or taps in out-houses."

(b) Wolverhampton Corporation Water Undertaking.

"The water supplied by the Wolverhampton Corporation Water Undertaking is a mixture of waters from a number of sources of supply, and is supplied into that part of the Sedgley Urban District which lies within the water limits of this Undertaking, including Goldthorn Park area to which you refer, in various proportions according to the part of the district and varying circumstances obtaining from time to time. In answer to your queries I therefore have included the total number of analyses made from the various sources of supply, all of which are supplied, from time to time to the Water Undertaking's portion of the Sedgley Urban District referred to. These figures are for the 12 months 1st January to 31st December, 1947.

- (i) The supply of water to the portion of the Sedgley Urban District concerned has been satisfactory both (a) in quality, and (b) in quantity.
- (ii) The following is a summary of the bacteriological examinations of water and the results, after treatment where necessary, sampled at the sources going into supply or in the course of distribution.

**Number of samples containing presumptive
B.coli-aerogenes per 100 c.c.**

Containing Nil organisms	337
„ 1 to 2 organisms	19
„ 3 to 10 organisms	6
„ over 10 organisms	3
<hr/>	
Total number of samples taken	365
<hr/>	

Sixteen of the 28 samples containing B.coli-aerogenes were taken during June and July, 1947 at Tettenhall Waterworks.

In addition to the above 65 analyses were made of water at source of supply before treatment.

Thirty-eight chemical analyses were made of the water going into supply and from the distribution system, and 18 chemical analyses of raw water before treatment. The results were satisfactory.

- (iii) The water supplied by the Wolverhampton Corporation Water Undertaking does not have a plumbo-solvent action.
- (iv) Subsequent to treatment where necessary at the supply works there has been no known contamination of the water going into supply."
- (v) The number of dwelling houses in the Goldthorn Park area supplied direct from the mains is estimated as 772.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.

Mr. W. M. Jones, B.Sc. (Eng.), Assoc. Mem. Inst. C.E., your Surveyor, has furnished me with the following report :

Sewerage.

The construction of foul and surface water sewers has been carried out on two new housing schemes — Gibbons Hill and Eve Lane sites.

By means of the former sewerage system it was found possible to connect 10 existing privately owned houses in Wolverhampton Road previously drained to cesspools, thereby obviating a considerable nuisance and bringing about more healthy conditions.

The foul sewerage scheme for the Catholic Lane and Sandyfields Road area is now well advanced and will result in numerous cesspools in Catholic Lane and Sandyfields Road being done away with. It is regretted that the comprehensive scheme proposed for this area, which would have cut out all the cesspools in Sandyfields Road and some in the village itself was not allowed by the Ministry of Health. It was only possible to get this modified scheme approved for the reason that a proposed housing site will eventually drain to it.

A foul sewer extension will shortly be carried out to premises in Himley Road.

Sewage Disposal.

Recent analyses of sewage effluents indicate that apart from Beacon Works, the sewage works are not as efficient as they might be. As previously reported the trouble is due to insufficient sludge drying beds, so that removal of sludge from settlement and humus tanks is not carried out sufficiently frequently. The results of this are indicated by too high a figure for solids in suspension and biochemical oxygen demand, and ponding of the filters.

Work will commence shortly on the construction of two sludge beds at Lower Gornal Works, where the worst conditions exist, which should effect the desired improvement.

At Gospel End Works, trouble is experienced when both pumps are in operation at Goldthorn Park Pumping Station. Sewage is then delivered to the works in too great a volume for adequate treatment, and the danger exists of sewage overflowing from the storm water tanks to the stream.

The removal of surface water from the foul sewers on Goldthorn Park Estate would be the ideal remedy for this and would considerably reduce pumping costs. The alternative method would be to provide a balancing tank at the works to deal with the sudden heavy volume of sewage pumped in times of storm.

Public Conveniences.

Since the last report the convenience adjoining the Red Lion, Gornal Wood has been transferred to the Council for future maintenance. It was put into good decorative and functional condition by the Brewery Company, and it is regretted that due to the activities of certain people it has not remained in that condition.

Considerable wilful damage continues to be done to the Public Conveniences near The Green Dragon Inn, which are a constant source of expense to the rates in maintaining in a clean and usable condition.

The construction of new conveniences in Gospel End Street is about to commence, a contract having been accepted recently. It is hoped that these will be free from the troubles associated with the two preceding conveniences. After their construction, the existing place in Gospel End Street will be demolished.

Sanitary Inspection.

The systematic inspection of the district has been carried out in an efficient manner. Details are given in the report of the Sanitary Inspector.

HOUSING.

Many houses which in pre-war years would have been considered as unfit from a sanitary and health point of view and due for demolition are still in occupation. Only the stringency of the housing situation and the shortage of building material and labour have reprieved many of these properties. It is fully appreciated that, in view of the scarcity of and demand for housing accommodation at the present moment the policy should be one of conservation as far as is possible and compatible with health.

Your Sanitary Inspector makes further comments on the housing situation in his section of this report.

During 1947, 86 permanent houses were completed by the Local Authority, and 14 by private enterprise making a total of 100 houses completed during the year.

INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

Particulars of samples taken in Sedgley U.D. during 1947.

FOOD AND DRUGS ACT, 1938.

Article	Samples taken	Genuine	Adulterated
General Foods	17	17	—
MILK	38	35	3
Particulars as to adulteration :— Milk.—One sample 6·7% deficiency in fat. One sample 9% deficiency in fat. Milk, Pasteurised.—One sample 2·3% added water.			

MILK AND DAIRIES ACTS AND ORDERS.

Designation	No. of samples submitted	Cleanliness		Phosphatase		Contain'g Tubercle Bacilli
		Satis.	Unsatis.	Pass	Fail	
Tuberculin Tested	3	3	—	—	—	—
Pasteurised ..	1*	1	—	1	—	—
Undesignated ..	19	17	2	—	—	—

* No biological test.

FOOD PREMISES.

The Sanitary Inspector reports fully on this subject.

PREVALENCE OF, AND CONTROL OVER, INFECTIOUS AND OTHER DISEASES.

The prevalence of notifiable diseases during the year shows an increase on last year, the number of notifications being 282 against 112 last year. This increase was occasioned by the marked increase in Measles and Scarlet Fever.

Measles.

165 cases were notified, as against 12 last year. There was one death.

Scarlet Fever.

Cases totalled 80, as against 11 last year. Fifteen cases were admitted to Hospital, home nursing being possible in all other instances. There were no deaths.

Whooping Cough.

There were 12 cases against 39 last year.

Diphtheria.

There were three cases against five last year. Two cases were admitted to Hospital. There were no deaths.

Supplies of Diphtheria Anti-toxin were always available on application to the Health Department.

Smallpox.

In view of the incidence of Smallpox in Bilston and Coseley it was deemed advisable to offer facilities for Vaccination.

Arrangements were made with the Public Vaccinator to hold sessions for this purpose, and with the aid of co-opted local practitioners, approximately 2,500 persons were vaccinated.

No cases occurred in the area. Special vigilance was maintained in respect of chicken-pox cases.

The total admissions for all infectious diseases to Hospital were 17.

Moxley	Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	8
	Diphtheria ..	..	..	..	2
Stallings Lane	Scarlet Fever	..	..	..	7

The incidence of other infectious diseases is shown in appended table.

AGE GROUPS OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE (excluding Tuberculosis) notified in 1947.

DISEASE	TOTAL	At all ages		Under 1 year	1 to 2 years	2 to 3 years	3 to 4 years	4 to 5 years	5 to 10 years	10 to 15 years	15 to 25 years	25 to 45 years	45 to 65 years	65 years and over
		M.	F.											
Scarlet Fever ..	80	29	51	—	2	1	3	3	31	27	8	5	—	—
Measles ..	165	89	76	2	10	20	25	24	79	3	1	1	—	—
Diphtheria ..	3	2	1	—	—	—	—	1	—	1	—	1	—	—
Pneumonia ..	18	12	6	—	—	—	—	1	3	2	2	3	3	4
Erysipelas ..	3	1	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	2	—
Whooping Cough	12	7	5	1	2	4	—	4	1	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
TOTALS ..	282	140	142	3	14	25	28	33	114	33	11	12	5	4

Swabs and Specimens submitted to the County Laboratory :—

Nose and Throat	28
Sputum Tests for Tubercle Bacilli of which 11 were positive.	33
Pleural Effusion	2
Faecal Tests	18
Blood Tests	—

General Measures.

School notifications of Infectious Disease are carefully scrutinised and made prompt use of for the purpose of guidance and location.

Schools are disinfected when considered desirable. The opening wide of windows to ensure a free circulation of fresh air is also insisted upon during week-ends and holiday periods.

Terminal disinfection of premises and articles which have been exposed to infection is also carried out in all cases of Diphtheria, Scarlet Fever, Tuberculosis, Cancer and other cases of long standing disease.

Disinfection is by means of formaldehyde lamps and disinfectant fluid.

Scabies.

There has been a marked decrease in the prevalence of this disease.

The Scabies Order, 1941, ceased to operate on December 31st.

There has been no occasion to exercise statutory powers.

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION.

During the year 272 children received protective treatment.

Number of Children who have completed a full course of Immunisation
at any time up to 31st December, 1947.

Age at 31/12/47 ..	Under 1	1	2	3	4	5 to 9	10 to 14	TOTAL
i.e., Born in year	1947	1946	1945	1944	1943	1938 to 1942	1933 to 1937	
Number immunised	57	159	159	208	249	1261	1256	3349
Estimated mid-year child population, 1947	1750					2920		
						4670		

This would indicate that 47·5% of children under 5 years of age
have received protective treatment and 80·2% of children over
5 years and under 15 years of age.

In terms of total child population under 15 years of age, this would mean that 72% have received protective treatment. This percentage may possibly be slightly higher if those children who have been done by their own doctor — under private arrangements — are taken into account, but no accurate statistical figures in this respect for the period under review are available.

TUBERCULOSIS.

The number of new cases notified for the year was 16 pulmonary and 1 non-pulmonary as against 17 pulmonary and 4 non-pulmonary in 1946.

Age Periods	NEW CASES				DEATHS			
	Pulmonary		Non- Pulmonary		Pulmonary		Non- Pulmonary	
	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.	M.	F.
Under 1 year	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1 to 4 years	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
5 to 9 years	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10 to 14 years	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
15 to 19 years	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
20 to 24 years	1	1	—	—	1	—	—	—
25 to 34 years	1	1	—	—	—	3	—	—
35 to 44 years	4	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
45 to 54 years	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	—
55 to 65 years	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65 years & over	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	11	5	—	1	3	3	—	1

YEARLY FIGURES FOR THE LAST DECADE.

Year	NEW CASES		DEATHS	
	Pulmonary	Non- Pulmonary	Pulmonary	Non- Pulmonary
1938	11	7	7	4
1939	25	2	14	3
1940	16	3	12	1
1941	23	7	16	6
1942	32	9	14	6
1943	23	—	14	—
1944	18	4	10	2
1945	19	4	8	6
1946	17	4	5	2
1947	16	1	6	1

FACTORIES ACT, 1937.

Part 1.

1. Inspections for purposes of provisions as to health (including inspections made by Sanitary Inspector).

PREMISES.	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspection	Written Notices	Occu- piers Prose- cuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities ..	16	37	7	Nil
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority ..	43	102	—	Nil
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' Premises)	—	—	—	Nil
Total ..	59	139	7	Nil

2. Cases in which Defects were found.

Particulars.	No. of Cases in which Defects were found.				No. of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Found	Remedied	Referred		
			To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness ..	3	3	—	4	—
Overcrowding ..	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences					
(a) Insufficient ..	2	1	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective ..	4	4	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork) ..	2	1	—	—	—
Total ..	11	9	—	4	—

Part VIII of the Act.

OUTWORK.

	Section 110.		
	Number of Out- Workers.	Number of cases of default in sending lists to the Council.	Number of prosecu- tions for failure to supply lists.
Wearing Apparel (Making, etc.)	105	—	—
Carding, etc., of buttons, etc.	14	—	—
Total	119	—	—

REPORT OF THE SANITARY INSPECTOR.

The year 1947 was one of contrasts — the particularly severe early months doing their worst, but not succeeding, in playing havoc with the work of the public cleansing service, followed by one of the best summers I can remember — good not only for human beings but for crickets, ants, flies and other lovable creatures.

We had no serious staffing troubles during the year. Mr. Bowyer returned from the forces to take up duty again in the department and filled the breach left by the retirement of Mr. Pearson at the end of 1946.

I wish to give here my sincere thanks to all the staff for their loyal and valuable help at all times, and to the men of the cleansing section for the good work they have done during the year.

In the following pages I report on the various branches of the work undertaken by the department.

HOUSING.

While there may be greater problems before the Government to-day, as far as the Local Authority is concerned housing is the subject of paramount importance. One must admit, of course, that only a minority of the public are concerned — those who have no house of their own, those who have to put up with unwelcome lodgers, those living in insanitary and overcrowded dwellings, and the local authority and its officers. The majority of the population are adequately housed, and it makes one wonder if this is not the reason why the problem is being solved so slowly. And the progress is undoubtedly slow. Comparisons with other years are useless. What must be the only criterion is the rate at which we are moving towards final solution. And at the end of the year we were no better off than at the beginning. The rate of building appears only to equal the recurring yearly demand for houses.

The Health Department is directly concerned in this appalling problem as we are responsible for the letting of all Council houses, and to those to whom this report is addressed, I do not need to stress either the urgency or the seriousness of the position. The difficulties are, however, another matter. The housing position in the country is one of the results of the war which is not being equally borne by the whole population. It is difficult to see how it can be, but it is a fact nevertheless that certain individuals are

suffering much more than others. The only thing the Local Authority can do is to try to allocate the new houses as fairly as is humanly possible. This, I am convinced is being done, although how we are to get the public to believe so is quite another matter. I can only state, that I personally would have nothing to do with the matter if I did not feel that the Housing Committee were acting in a just and honourable manner, and I know that I would not be allowed to continue with the detailed administration, if the Committee had no confidence in the way the work was being done.

Houses are allocated according to a points scheme which has been devised so as to show us who are the most deserving cases. A point which is often overlooked is that this does not necessarily mean that the worst cases of overcrowding are housed first, as this would be opening the door to deliberate attempts to get round the points scheme. I do not print the actual scheme, as it appeared in last year's report. Besides, it is amended from time to time in the light of experience, and the actual points awarded during 1947 might not be the same at the time this report is published.

During the year, 78 new permanent houses were let and another 27 houses became vacant either on the existing housing schemes or in requisitioned property. This, I am sorry to say, made no apparent difference to the application list. Some regular callers at the office disappeared and were seen no more, but many of the others merely became more persistent in their visits.

The shortage of new houses unavoidably influenced the other work of the department under the Housing Act, 1936. It will readily be seen how impossible, or at least undesirable, it was to try to condemn any of the houses for which that is the only solution. However, demolition orders had to be made on three houses which were in such a state as to be dangerous :—

- 9, Chase Road.
- 3, Coopers Bank Road.
- 3, Club Row.

We tried to leave the other unfit property for the time being in the hope of an early increase in the building rate, but first aid repairs had to be executed on many, as the tenants made capital of their housing conditions in order to stress their claims for re-housing. In fact, some of the more persistent attempts of this kind came from the occupants of houses which could not by any means be described as unfit.

Generally speaking, repairs to property were not easy throughout the year. In order to ease the financial burden to owners, and to conserve building materials and time, only attenuated notices were served. Urgent and serious matters were attended to, but small inconveniences were ignored, as were all items which might be described as improvements.

A gradual change is being noticed in the attitude of the occupiers of sub-standard property. The day appears to have gone when large numbers of complaints were received about conditions calling for the service of notices. Now, many people are putting up with the conditions—we have had occasions where the tenants actually tried to prevent the owner carrying out repairs. This does not mean that people are satisfied with their conditions or dulled into complacency. It means that they are so dissatisfied, that nothing short of a new house with modern conveniences interests them. Patching repairs to their present house only inconveniences them, and from their point of view the house is still the same. If this feeling is at all universal throughout the country, the housing problem assumes gigantic proportions and will not be solved except by heroic measures apparently undreamed of at the moment.

PRIVIES.

In 1939, there were 409 privy middens in the district and several attempts were made during the difficult war period to get rid of these insanitary conveniences. During the year under review these attempts were intensified, with the result that at the end of the year, only 117 remained. In the cases of those remaining, notices for conversion have been served, and in many cases the work is in hand. I am convinced that 1948 will see the final elimination of these out-of-date, and in many cases, disgusting contraptions.

Where sewers were available, connections thereto were insisted upon, but where there was no sewer (which was so in the majority of cases), either cesspools or chemical closets were asked for.

The use of chemical closets was regarded as being much preferable to pail closets, and in practice has shown itself to be so. While not entirely satisfactory where there is a large family, in the majority of cases there are few if any complaints, and they are undoubtedly more satisfactory in every way than the old privies. All chemical closets are emptied by the department at least weekly, and some are emptied twice weekly.

FOOD PREMISES.

There is nothing at all spectacular to report under this heading. No trouble or even cause for anxiety arose during the year in any of the premises concerned. Generally speaking they are well maintained and on the visits of inspection no serious cause for complaint was encountered.

I am including under this heading the 20 dairy farms, the 9 bakehouses, the 15 fried fish shops, the 22 meat shops, the 3 cafés or restaurants, and the 21 ice cream premises in the district. The value of personal contact through inspections cannot be over-estimated, and it is on this that the department relies especially in those cases that require some gentle persuasion in the principles of hygiene.

FOOD INSPECTION.

The only slaughterhouse at present in use in the district is a small bacon factory where 520 pigs were inspected during the year. The department also inspected as many cottagers' pigs as possible, but a number of these are killed without notification, or the notification arrives by post just too late. During the year 112 cottagers' pigs were inspected at various premises throughout the district.

From the total of 632 pigs inspected, 7 cwts. 32 lbs. of meat was condemned, practically all of this being due to tuberculosis. Altogether 41 heads and 32 plucks were condemned with this disease. The amount of meat condemned was remarkably low, and the absence of other diseases quite astonishing. I cannot account for this except through the fact that with the relatively small number of pigs killed in the district, chance is bound to play an important part.

The percentage of pigs found affected with tuberculosis was 6.6. The percentage would doubtless be a little higher if the cottagers' pigs were not included, as it is rare that anything is found to be wrong with these pigs.

In addition to the above, foodstuffs of all kinds, but mainly tinned goods, were examined in shops, and the quantities detailed below were certified unfit for human consumption.

Butter	..	..	..	..	..	28	lbs.
Cheese	..	..	..	..	..	47	lbs.
Bacon	..	..	..	..	..	34 $\frac{1}{4}$	lbs.
Prunes	..	..	..	..	..	12	lbs.

Meat	..	..	..	..	..	..	23	tins
Fish	..	..	..	..	..	..	19	tins
Milk	..	..	..	..	..	..	206	tins
Soup	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	tins
Beans	..	..	..	..	..	..	20	tins
Peas	..	..	..	..	..	..	15	tins
Fruit	..	..	..	..	..	..	15	tins
Jam	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	tin
Syrup	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	tin
Sausage	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	tin
Dried Egg	..	..	..	..	..	..	1	tin
Tomatoes	..	..	..	..	..	..	4	tins

INSPECTIONS.

During the year, inspections to premises of various kinds number 5,602. In addition, 1,410 re-inspections were made to properties under notice.

The types of inspections are listed in the table below :—

Ambulance	..	..	..	..	..	..	36
Ashbins	..	..	..	..	..	..	178
Ashpits	..	..	..	..	..	..	5
Bakehouses	..	..	..	..	..	..	42
Billeting	..	..	..	..	..	..	19
Cesspools	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
Cottagers' Pigs	..	..	..	..	..	..	112
Drainage	..	..	..	..	..	..	35
Dairies and Cowsheds	..	..	..	..	..	..	122
Fried Fish Shops	..	..	..	..	..	..	48
Food Premises	..	..	..	..	..	..	59
Factories	..	..	..	..	..	..	21
General Nuisances	..	..	..	..	..	..	30
Houses under P.H.A.	..	..	..	..	..	..	428
Housing Act	..	..	..	..	..	..	13
Houses Fumigated	..	..	..	..	..	..	61
Housing Survey	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,676
Ice Cream Premises	..	..	..	..	..	..	126
Infectious Disease	..	..	..	..	..	..	233
Interviews	..	..	..	..	..	..	138
Letting of Council Houses	..	..	..	..	..	..	332
Licensed Premises	..	..	..	..	..	..	25
Meat Shops	..	..	..	..	..	..	39
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	..	..	15
Overcrowding	..	..	..	..	..	..	3

Public Cleansing	..	..	..	..	..	1,147
Piggeries	..	..	..	..	..	4
Privies	..	..	..	..	..	444
Re-inspections	..	..	..	..	..	1,410
Rats and Mice Destruction	..	..	..	..	..	65
Slaughterhouses	..	..	..	..	..	67
Salvage	..	..	..	..	..	69
Tents, Vans, Sheds	..	..	..	..	..	5

NOTICES.

The number of informal notices served during the year was 490. Of this number, and those outstanding from the previous year, 487 were complied with during the year.

It was necessary to serve 138 statutory notices during the year and all of these were complied with.

The following table gives a summary of the work carried out in the district as a result of the above notices.

Accumulations removed	..	..	..	..	1
Ashbins provided	..	..	..	..	376
Ashpits demolished	..	..	..	..	1
Burst pipes repaired	..	..	..	..	21
Bakehouses limewashed	..	..	..	..	2
Bathroom provided	..	..	..	..	1
Ceilings repaired or renewed	..	..	..	..	39
Ceilings whitewashed	..	..	..	..	4
Chimney Stacks repaired	..	..	..	..	7
Cowsheds repaired	..	..	..	..	2
Cowsheds limewashed	..	..	..	..	4
Dampness remedied	..	..	..	..	4
Dirty premises cleansed	..	..	..	..	3
Doors renewed	..	..	..	..	4
Doors repaired	..	..	..	..	16
Drainage provided	..	..	..	..	1
Drainage cleared	..	..	..	..	16
Firegrates repaired	..	..	..	..	19
Floors repaired	..	..	..	..	18
House roofs repaired	..	..	..	..	63
Houses demolished	..	..	..	..	3
Miscellaneous	..	..	..	..	9
New coal-store provided	..	..	..	..	1
Outbuildings limewashed	..	..	..	..	4
Plasterwork repaired	..	..	..	..	55
Privies converted to W.C.s	..	..	..	..	28

Privies converted to Chemical Closets	..	..	133
Rats and Mice Destruction..	..	..	5
Sink waste pipes repaired	..	..	4
Sinks provided	..	..	4
Spouting repaired	..	..	15
Stair treads repaired	..	..	11
Walls pointed	..	..	10
Walls limewashed	..	..	16
Washing Boilers repaired or renewed	..	..	19
Water supply re-introduced	..	..	3
W.C.s cleansed	..	..	6
W.C.s repaired	..	..	9
W.C. new pans provided	..	..	16
W.C. cisterns repaired	..	..	21
W.C. provided	..	..	2
Windows repaired	..	..	41
Windows provided	..	..	5
Yards cleansed	..	..	3
Yard paving relaid	..	..	3

CLEANSING DEPARTMENT.

During the early part of 1947, very severe weather conditions considerably hampered the work of refuse collection, but the experience of previous years had shown us the danger of waiting for improved conditions, as the accumulation of refuse took months before it was finally cleared. The men therefore worked steadily through one of the worst winters I can remember and at no time was the work seriously behind.

Throughout the year, with the exception of the period above mentioned, the time between the emptying of bins was ten days. In December another new S.D. Freighter was delivered, and the districts were rearranged so that from January a regular weekly collection could be instituted from all houses.

Throughout the year the supply of dustbins continued to be difficult, but the position has now eased considerably.

During the very hot summer we had considerable difficulty with crickets on our refuse tip. The outbreak was serious, and the insects invaded a nearby scheme of aluminium bungalows. The nuisance was finally abated after heroic efforts and at great cost. The tip had been treated with the usual tip dressing throughout the year, but as such an outbreak was not at all expected, I am afraid the work was not carried out with the thoroughness

and regularity which was required. Crickets are, of course, brought to the tip in the refuse from bakehouses and other places, and once there they find an ideal breeding ground especially in the very hot summer we experienced in 1947. The principle of killing off the crickets after they have become a nuisance, however, is entirely wrong, and we are now devoting our efforts to preventing a recurrence of the trouble. Gammexane is being used for this purpose, and time will tell whether or not it is successful. During the outbreak it was surprising to find how difficult it was to get much reliable information concerning the insect, and research into the subject would be very useful. I understand that quite a few authorities experienced the same trouble during 1947, and I have wondered if there is a cycle in the life history of this insect which may have a bearing on the matter. The only previous outbreak I had come across, extending over a period of 26 years, was in 1933, in that occasion on a crude tip. The question that arises is why infestation did not assume serious proportions in any of the other years, especially as during the greater part of this quarter of a century, little or no precautions were taken against such an eventuality?

SALVAGE.

I am glad to report that the year 1947 showed an increase over the previous year both in the total tonnage of salvage collected and in the income from same. Looking back to the figures for 1942, it is difficult to understand how we managed to achieve them. The same service is in operation to-day, but the results are very much worse. However, the improvement during the year under review is encouraging, and efforts are being made to see that the figures for 1948 will prove better still.

I append a table showing the tonnage of materials salvaged during the past eight years.

	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons	Tons
Kitchen Waste	8	116	222	194	181	167	172	165
Paper	90	106	127	92	68	61	46	56
Rags	2	5	6	6	5	5	2	3
Jars	5	10	14	16	9	6	7	5
Bottles	5	8	10	7	5	6	4	8
Metal	17	10	14	13	8	7	6	6
Bones	5	5	4	4	5	3	2	2
Cullett	12	29	26	33	24	9	2	9
Tins	39	65	75	41	—	25	—	—
Rubber	—	—	3	2	2	—	—	—
	<hr/> 183	<hr/> 354	<hr/> 501	<hr/> 408	<hr/> 307	<hr/> 289	<hr/> 241	<hr/> 254

The prices received for the above-mentioned materials were :—

	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Kitchen Waste	35	158	371	311	285	264	309	346
Paper	352	432	725	589	437	395	306	365
Rags	9	20	69	97	91	73	35	50
Jars	16	28	52	70	38	28	31	25
Bottles	16	32	43	38	32	38	21	52
Metal	34	30	43	39	20	21	15	15
Bones	15	18	12	18	23	15	11	9
Cullett	11	25	23	33	24	9	2	9
Tins	35	64	92	41	—	23	—	—
Rubber	—	—	4	6	2	—	—	—
	<u>£527</u>	<u>£807</u>	<u>£1434</u>	<u>£1242</u>	<u>£952</u>	<u>£866</u>	<u>£730</u>	<u>£871</u>

VERMIN AND PESTS.

During the year our main work under this heading (with the exception of the cricket infestation reported elsewhere) was under the Rats and Mice Destruction Act. The main reservoir for these rodents remains the sewers, and treatment here still shows high results. The four sewage disposal works which were formerly quite badly infested showed the rat population very considerably decreased. There is no other place in the district where we can with any certainty be sure of finding rats. This does not mean that the district is clear, but that the various surface infestations, all of a minor character, are dealt with as they arise. We are fortunate that we have no premises in the district such as large foodstores, or offensive trades, which might be liable to major infestation.

With regard to insect pests, we had very little trouble with cockroaches during the year. Ants became troublesome during the hot summer, but we were fully occupied with the cricket problem at that period, and I am afraid they had to die off naturally or at the hands of the tenants. Bugs were discovered in one house, the first I had seen in the district for several years, and they were easily eradicated as the infestation was slight.

Flies continue to be a serious problem, both because of the extent of the nuisance and because of the general apathy of the public. One cricket will cause more complaint than a hundred flies, despite the comparative harmlessness of the cricket. Shopkeepers are especially unco-operative in keeping down flies and certain fish shops are in this respect being carefully watched.

In conclusion, I have much pleasure in stating that speaking generally, environmental hygiene in Sedgley is of a satisfactory standard. The district is clean and the public co-operate readily in our endeavours to maintain that standard. The Health Committee and the Council give their utmost support to all our work, and I trust that this will be continued in the future for the ultimate benefit of the residents.

DAVID J. W. ROBERTSON,

Sanitary Inspector.

